Page 38, line 14, please replace the subheading as originally filed with the following subheading:

B3 A1. Preparation of r-antigen coated microparticles

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 16, 17 and 22, without prejudice.

Please replace claims 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10 and 13, as filed, with the following amended claims having the same numbering:

Sub. D1 B4

1. (amended) A method of simultaneously detecting at least one Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) antigen and at least one HCV antibody in a test sample comprising contacting said test sample with a mixture of:

1) at least one HCV antigen or portion thereof coated on a solid phase, for a time and under conditions sufficient for the formation of antibody/antigen complexes, presence of said antibody/antigen complexes indicating presence of said at least one HCV antibody in said test sample; and

2) at least one HCV antibody or portion thereof coated on said solid phase, for a time and under conditions sufficient for the formation of antigen/antibody complexes, presence of antigen/antibody complexes indicating presence of at least one HCV antigen in said test sample.

2. (amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said at least one HCV antigen coated on the solid phase is selected from the group consisting of core antigen, NS3, NS4 and NS5.

3. (amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said at least one antibody coated on said solid phase is a monoclonal antibody selected from the group consisting of 107-35-54, 110-81-17, 13-975-157, 14-1350-210, C11-3, C11-7, C11-10 and C11-14.

8. (amended) A method for simultaneously detecting the presence of at least one HCV antigen and at least one HCV antibody in a test sample comprising the steps of:

a) contacting said test sample with: 1) at least one HCV antigen or portion thereof coated on a solid phase, for a time and under conditions sufficient for the formation of antibody/antigen complexes and 2) at least one HCV antibody or portion thereof coated on said solid phase, for a time and under conditions sufficient for the formation of antigen/antibody complexes;

b) adding a conjugate to the resulting antibody/antigen complexes of (a)(1) for a time and under conditions sufficient to allow said conjugate to bind to the bound antibody in (a)(1), wherein said conjugate comprises a second antibody attached to a chemiluminescent compound capable of generating a detectable signal; and simultaneously adding a second conjugate to the resulting antigen/antibody complexes of (a)(2) for a time and under conditions sufficient to allow said conjugate to bind to the bound antigen in (a)(2), wherein said conjugate comprises a third antibody attached to said chemiluminescent compound capable of generating a detectable signal; and

c) detecting said generated signal, presence of said signal indicating presence of at least one HCV antigen, at least one HCV antibody, or both, in said test sample.

Sub. D2

9. (amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said at least one HCV antigen coated on the solid phase is selected from the group consisting of core antigen, NS3, NS4 and NS5.

B5

10. (amended) The method of claim 9 wherein said at least one antibody coated on said solid phase is a monoclonal antibody selected from the group consisting of 107-35-54, 110-81-17, 13-975-157, 14-1350-210, C11-3, C11-7, C11-10 and C11-14.

Sub. D3

14. (amended) The kit of claim 12 or claim 13 further comprising at least one conjugate comprising a signal-generating compound attached to an antibody.

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